

August 26, 2003

Public Notice for 401 Certification

**California Department of Transportation
Greenwood Creek Bridge Replacement Project
WDID No. 1B03100WNME
Mendocino County**

On June 2, 2003, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Ms. Cher Daniels on behalf of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), requesting Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for the Greenwood Creek Bridge (Bridge No. 10-123) Replacement Project a half mile south of the town of Elk in Mendocino County. The proposed project will cause disturbances to riparian habitat associated with the Greenwood Creek Hydrologic Subarea No. 113.61.

The purpose of the project is to replace the existing Greenwood Creek Bridge, which is 505 feet long and 26 feet wide. The proposed bridge will be 554 feet long and 43 feet wide. The project is a Caltrans priority because the bridge has been designated as "scour critical", which means it is currently stable, but may become unstable in the event of a large storm or long-term scour condition. The new bridge will be wide enough to accommodate an 8-foot wide shoulder on either side, as well as an upgraded bridge rail. The new bridge will be built 40 feet east of the existing bridge and the realignment of the approaches will extend for 1,000 feet to the north and south of the bridge. In addition to the bridge replacement work, an existing 72-inch diameter culvert in an unnamed tributary south of the bridge will be extended by approximately 32.5 feet. No work will be conducted within the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) of Greenwood Creek.

Demolition of the existing bridge will be accomplished by the use of heavy equipment. No explosives will be used, and a protective covering will be placed over the creek to prevent any material falling into the creek during demolition. The existing footing located within Greenwood Creek will not be removed, although the pier down to the footing will be removed using a hydraulic concrete breaker and concrete saw. Any material dislodged from the pier during removal will be contained.

Three retaining walls are proposed: one will be located south of the Greenwood Creek Bridge and will be approximately 27 feet high and 377 feet long; the second will be located north of the bridge and will be approximately 13 feet high and 312 feet long; the third is to be located south of the bridge and east of the existing access road and will be approximately 13 feet high and 174 feet long.

Waters of the United States (Waters) on-site are two streams and one 0.02-acre wetland on-site. Potential impacts to these Waters consist of the proposed culvert extension, resulting in 163 square feet (0.0037 acres) of fill. Impacts to Waters, including the above-referenced 0.0037 acres, total 0.0237 acre. The on-site wetland will be avoided to the maximum extent feasible. As mitigation for any unavoidable impact to the wetland, Caltrans has proposed to construct a new wetland adjacent to the project site at a 1:1 ratio.

The project involves the removal of vegetation to a maximum distance of 150 feet upstream and downstream of the bridge. Vegetation removal will be mitigated by revegetation of disturbed areas, including the old roadway, with native plants. Greenwood Creek is a migratory corridor for Steelhead Trout. Caltrans proposes to follow a project schedule that avoids spawning times, and to mitigate for potential impacts to Steelhead by restoring disturbed aquatic and riparian habitats, and implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce potential erosion, sedimentation, and contamination of the creek. There will be no permanent impacts to the creek from construction activities. A temporary crossing will be placed over the creek to allow equipment to cross.

A detailed description of the mitigation plan for this proposal has not been provided. The Regional Water Board will not issue a 401 Permit until details of this mitigation plan have been submitted by the applicant and approved by this office.

Caltrans has applied for Nationwide Permit No. 14 from United States Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, as well as a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement from California Department of Fish and Game, both of which are pending. Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, Caltrans has determined the project to have no significant impact on the environment and prepared a Negative Declaration.

The project is scheduled in three phases. Phase 1, building the new structure, will take place from June 1st through October 15th, 2004. Phase 2, continued construction, will take place from June 1st through October 15th, 2005. Phase 3, completion of construction, demolition of the old structure, and riparian revegetation, will take place from June 1st through October 15th, 2006.

Staff is proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act Authority. In addition, staff will consider all comments received during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Mona Dougherty by phone at (707) 570-3761, or e-mail doug@rb1.swrcb.ca.gov within 21 days of the posting of this notice.